Update from Amherst Charter Commission

Andy Churchill*, Chair

Tom Fricke

Meg Gage*

Nick Grabbe, Clerk

Mandi Jo Hanneke*, Vice Chair

Irv Rhodes*

Julia Rueschemeyer*

Diana Stein*

Gerry Weiss*

Summary

- Great deal of input on values/attributes of good local govt.
- Entering deliberative phase mapping values to structure
- This is an iterative process
- We will continue to reach out to the community as proposals get more concrete
- Draft charter document (by July 31, 2017)
- Get feedback from community, Atty. General, etc.
- Produce final charter document (by Sept. 29, 2017)
- Communicate to community about it

Gathered Input from Over 250 People

- 1 Public Hearing: 37 speakers, approximately 65 attendees
- 6 Listening Workshops: approximately 72 participants
- 27 comments via email on process by 7 individuals
- 38 comments by email on substance by 24 individuals
- 10 handwritten comment forms during spring Town Meeting and Public Hearing
- 33 comments submitted via electronic form: 11 anonymous, the rest by 15 separate individuals
- Public Comment at Commission meetings: approximately 20 different people
- Comments at Block Party and First Day: 60+ individuals

Gathered Input from Over 250 People

- Previous charter commission members
- Town managers acting and former
- Select Board members
- Town Meeting moderators and TMCC representatives
- Town business representatives
- Planning/zoning/inspections officials
- Public safety and public works officials

Identified Some Key Values:

- Citizen participation and involvement (from voting to policymaking)
- A clear voice for Amherst (e.g., with UMass and colleges)
- Representativeness (demographics and interests)
- Effective, deliberative, and efficient structures, roles, and processes (within the government and with residents)
- Accountability and transparency
- A culture of tolerance and respect
- Able to address key challenges and craft future direction
- Avoid big-money politics

Mapping Values Onto Charter Components:

Legislative Branch (Town Meeting or Council)

Executive Branch (Select Board & Manager, Mayor, or Manager)

Other Elected Officials (e.g., School Committee)

Administrative Organization (e.g., Departments, Boards, Committees)

Financial Policies and Procedures (e.g., Budget)

Elections (Requirements, Procedures)

Citizen Participation/Relief (e.g., Petitions, Recalls)

Transition Provisions

3/27/18

TownŒlection

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Keep in Touch!

- Website: <u>www.amherstma.gov</u> click on <u>Boards and</u> <u>Committees</u>, click on <u>Charter Commission</u>
 - ✓ Sign up for weekly email update
 - ✓ Complete online input form
 - ✓ Link to agendas, minutes, videotaped sessions, comments from public
 - ✓ See charter workplan and drafts as developed
- Facebook: Amherst Charter Commission
- Email us: charter@amherstma.gov
- Meetings: in Police Station Community Room